

Innovative Readiness Training Questions and Answers

1. What's the goal of civil-military Innovative Readiness Training programs?

- Provide the Services/components “hands-on” readiness training opportunities, while at the same time, they provide a direct and lasting benefit to our communities.
- NOT an add-on training requirement to a military unit's current training schedule; Separate training option for a commander to consider using in the normal training planning process.

2. Why does Department of Defense support these programs?

- “Double bang” for our military training resources is smart use of our tax dollars.
- Provide real world realistic training.
- Build individual and unit morale.
- Contribute to recruiting and retention by “spotlighting” our military and its capabilities, especially the Reserve Components, in the communities from which all the Services recruit.

3. What is the Department of Defense’s position on these programs? Are we planning to expand them? Where will the majority of them take place?

- Civil-military innovative readiness training programs are conducted within the U.S., its territories and possessions by our military, especially our Guard and Reserve forces. Our military forces deployed overseas participate in a similar program known as Humanitarian and Civic Assistance Program. Civil-military innovative readiness training programs help address serious community needs in our own country.
- Primary units/individuals involved are combat support and service support units, i.e., medical, dental, engineering. Represent a small segment of our armed forces.

4. Do they involve only reservists, or active duty too? If so, to what extent?

- Primarily, Guard and Reserve units are involved; however, participation in IRT training programs is available to our active forces also provided it supports their readiness training objectives.

5. What types of community work would service members be asked to do? What would they NOT do?

- Engineering, medical, and dental work might be offered, because those skills are on hand and would provide a good match. Commanders would not become involved in any civil-military program that does not promote the operational readiness skills of the participating service members or the combat readiness of the military unit.

7. Do programs like these weaken the military and degrade readiness?

- No. Take a look at these programs. The individual and unit readiness training activity conducted during a civil-military innovative readiness training project is essentially the same as conducted on a military base or training area with two main differences: first, “hands-on” training is accomplished, involving real people producing real results; and second, training activity is conducted in one of our own communities experiencing a serious need that can be met as a result of that training.
- The bottom line is that when military skills are exercised, they are enhanced; when combat mission capabilities are used, military readiness is strengthened. The fact that the training occurs in our communities simply does not weaken or degrade military readiness.

8. What do Civil-Military Innovative Readiness Training Programs do for the military services and the individual service member?

- Commanders of units approve innovative readiness training initiatives that are compatible with their Mission Essential Task List (METL), which supports their wartime mission, and/or the military occupational specialties of their personnel. Combat units and personnel are not generally used to accomplish these IRT initiatives. Civil-military initiatives provide a commander a unique type of “hands-on” morale enhancing training.
- IRT enhances the military's image within our hometown communities and offer “real world” training in a “hands on” environment.
- Civil-military programs have a very positive impact on recruiting and retention by providing our military personnel, especially the Guard and Reserve components, an opportunity to training in support of their communities in which they live and help make a difference.

9. Are there Innovative Readiness Training projects that in fact adversely affect readiness?

- No. Most military assets that support Civil-Military Innovative Readiness Training initiatives are combat support and combat service support. The combat roles and missions of participating units are compatible with the type of support being provided to the civilian community. IRT initiatives are incidental to the Military Services’ normal training.
- The goal is to provide realistic “hands on” training to enhance existing training programs, while augmenting domestic needs, most often in the area of health care and engineering support.

10. How do Civil-Military Projects originate?

- Civil-Military Programs are designed to be partnership efforts between regional, state and local communities and Guard and Reserve units. Generally, representatives of local, state and federal agencies approach a Guard or Reserve unit commander with an identified project that is not otherwise being met through current or anticipated programs.
- The commander evaluates the project to ensure that it is compatible with Mission Essential Task List (METL) training requirements, and then determines the feasibility of using the project as a training exercise. During this evaluation process the Guard or Reserve unit commander should ensure that the Adjutant General (TAG) of the state in which the civil-military project would occur is informed. If the project meets identified training objectives it is then validated to ensure that it does not inappropriately compete with existing services provided by the private sector.

11. How are Civil-Military programs funded?

- The DoD Civil-Military Program is new to the Services in that it acknowledges civil-military projects as viable training options for unit commanders. To date, civil-military projects are not yet integrated into the Services’ routine training scheduling process. Therefore, limited Operations and Maintenance (O&M) and Military Pay and Allowances (MPA) funding is available to support incremental costs associated with civil-military projects.
- Funding submissions are routed through the Service Component Chiefs and submitted to the Office of Assistant Secretary of Defense for consideration. Every effort is made to ensure that projects funded by OASD/RA are spread out evenly throughout the service components.

INFORMATION SOURCES:

<http://www.defenselink.mil/ra/documents/irt/FY04Civil-MilitaryProjects.pdf>
<http://www.defenselink.mil/ra/ondemand/irt.html>